

Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens

WAC 296-823-100

Scope

This chapter provides requirements to protect employees from exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials (OPIM) that may contain bloodborne pathogens. Examples of bloodborne pathogens are the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and hepatitis B virus (HBV).

This chapter applies to you if you have employees with occupational exposure to blood or OPIM, even if no actual exposure incidents have occurred.



Definitions:

Occupational exposure: Reasonably anticipated skin, eye, mucous membrane, or parenteral contact with blood or OPIM that may result from the performance of an employee's duties.

Parenteral contact: When mucous membranes or skin is pierced by needlesticks, human bites, cuts, or abrasions.

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Occupations that are typically covered by this chapter

The following list illustrates a number of jobs typically associated with tasks that involve occupational exposure to blood or OPIM. The absence of a particular job from the list doesn't suggest that it falls outside the scope of this chapter. At the same time, employees in jobs found on the list are covered only if they have occupational exposure.

- Health care
 - Primary care providers
 - Assistants, nurses, nurse practitioners, dental hygienists, and other health care employees in clinics and offices
 - Employees of clinical, dental, and diagnostic laboratories
 - Housekeepers in health care facilities
 - Staff in laundries that provide service to health care facilities
 - Tissue bank personnel
 - Employees in blood banks and plasma centers who collect, transport, and test blood
 - Freestanding clinic employees (for example, hemodialysis clinics, urgent care clinics, health maintenance organization (HMO) clinics, and family planning clinics)
 - Employees in clinics in industrial, educational, and correctional facilities
 - Staff of institutions for the developmentally disabled
 - Hospice employees
 - Home health care workers
 - Staff of nursing homes and long-term care facilities
 - HIV and HBV research laboratory and production facility workers
 - Medical equipment service and repair personnel
 - Emergency medical technicians, paramedics, and other emergency medical service providers
 - Nuclear medical technologists.

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- Occupations outside health care
 - Fire fighters, law enforcement personnel, and correctional officers
 - Workers in laundries that service public safety institutions
 - Employees assigned to provide emergency first aid by their employer (as either a primary or secondary duty)
 - Employees who handle or pick up regulated waste (contaminated items with blood or OPIM)
 - Hotel/motel employees that clean up blood or OPIM
 - Employees of funeral homes and mortuaries.



Definitions:

Regulated waste is any of the following:

- Liquid or semiliquid blood or other potentially infectious materials (OPIM)
- Contaminated items that would release blood or OPIM in a liquid or semiliquid state, if compressed
- Items that are caked with dried blood or OPIM and are capable of releasing these materials during handling
- Contaminated sharps
- Pathological and microbiological wastes containing blood or OPIM.

Notes
